(b) if so, whether project has been cleared;

(c) the estimated cost of that project; and

(d) the details of the steps taken to implement it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (d) The project report on Brutang Irrigation Project envisaging irrigation benefits to Nayagarh District of Orissa at an estimated cost of Rs. 188.7 crore was received in the Central Water Commission (CWC) in January, 1998. The project report was examined and most of the aspects have already been finalized. Comments of CWC in respect of the remaining aspects have also been communicated to the State government. Clearance of the scheme is linked with the promptness with which the State government comply with the observations of the various central appraising agencies.

Being a State subject, irrigation projects are investigated, planned executed and funded by the State government themselves out of their own resources and as per their priorities.

Linking of Rivers

1749. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the work related to linking of some major rivers of North and Eastern States with south Indian rivers;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals pending with Government; and

(c) the steps taken to implement these projects to link these rivers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) The erstwhile Ministry of Irrigation (now Ministry of Water Resources) and Central Water Commission have formulated a National Perspective Plan for Water Resources Development which envisages inter-linkages between various Himalayan rivers and Peninsular rivers, including Ganga, Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna and Cauvery for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins for optimum utilization of water resources. The Government of India has established the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) as an Autonomous Society in July, 1982 to, *inter-alia* carry out the water balance and feasibility studies of National Perspective Plan. Implementation of water

transfer link proposal depends on availability of funds and how soon the detailed project reports are prepared after consensus is reached among the concerned States.

Increasing of the water level of Mullaperlyar Dam in Kerala

1750. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken to increase the water level of Mullaperiyar dam; if so, the extent to which it is likely to be increased;

(b) whether the Government are aware mat any move to increase the water level would adversely affect the interest of Kerala especially the people residing in Kottayam, Idukki and Ernakulam districts of Kerala;

(c) whether Government are also aware of the Mullaperiyar dam is unsafe since it was constructed hundred years back;

(d) whether Government consider to ensure the safety of the existing dam before deciding to increase the water level; and

(e) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (e) The matter regarding increase in the water level of Mullaperiyar Dam in Kerala is presently subjudice in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS SET FOR THE 4TH DECEMBER, 2000*

Making FDI more Liberal

201. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to make the foreign investment policy more liberal,

*The sitting of the Rajya Sabha on Monday, the 4th December, 2000 was adjourned as a mark of respect to the memory of Chaudhary Chunni Lal, a sitting Member. Answers to Questions put down in the lists for that day were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, the 5th December, 2000. tOriginal notice of the Question was received in Hindi.